

## **Priorities of Government—Tollgate 2 Guidance Team Feedback to Results Teams**

### **General Comments for All Teams**

- This year's work is a quantum leap from the first POG effort. Excellent work, great products, better focus. Much richer discussion about the strategies, why we do what we do, and whether we should continue to do those things. You've made great strides in just two years. It's exciting. Please keep at it. We need to keep using this disciplined approach as we consider state investments. If more people could see this, they would gain confidence in what government is doing. We hope you will feel confident enough in your work that you will share it with people, lots of people, to get the ideas out in the public for discussion and to gain buy-in for the process.
- As you proceed, continue to be clear about strategy priorities and the related trade-offs in doing so. We encourage groups to be clear about their focus and proposed choices.
- We encourage teams to meet with each other to share and discuss ideas and to look for opportunities to improve results by working on connections between results areas.
- You have permission to explore organization changes that could help us achieve results more efficiently and effectively. This is certainly a challenge when agency executives are part of the team, but it's essential to do it. Are we organized correctly to deliver these services? Are they appropriately placed? Please take a hard look at this issue.
- You also have permission to look at what things we should stop doing. It's clear the teams are looking for evidence about whether certain strategies are working. We also want to know if the evidence shows that strategies are not working to help achieve the result, so that available resources can be shifted to more effective strategies.
- Look for prevention and incentive strategies. There is a bias in the system against strategies that require waiting for long-term payoffs. Data and information about results is a way to overcome this bias. This information could lead you to some new places, including moving resources from one agency to another to achieve the result better.
- Encourage more focus on prevention and liability issues across results areas.
- The cause and effect maps are key—the better data and communication we have about those causal effects and linkages, the better case we can make for the best strategies.
- Many teams have presented rather general collaboration, cooperation, and partnership strategies. While these kinds of strategies can indeed be critical to achieving results, they can only be implemented if they are well defined. Teams need to be more specific about these strategies, be sure that the named partners would have the ability and capacity for the collaboration, and be able to demonstrate that the strategy would make a difference in achieving the result.

- Over the last several years we have reduced or cut a number of state services. Teams should remember to consider whether restoring these services would contribute to results more than adding new services.

### **Improve Student Achievement in Elementary, Middle and High Schools**

- Your materials note an assumption about the local control focus of our system. Did your team discuss this assumption and whether it should be revisited? It is a different approach than used by many states. Should this be the way we deliver education?
- The Guidance Team is interested in opportunities for result areas to work together on areas of connection and mutual interest.
  - Please follow through on coordination with the health area since school participation/readiness and health issues are so related.
  - We should be thinking in terms of P-20, so we all work together to achieve the most positive education results throughout P-20 with the resources available. For example, college students shouldn't have to take remedial courses to be ready for post-secondary learning. The Student Achievement and Post-Secondary Learning teams should pick some specific areas, such as the remediation issue, and develop a cross result area strategy to address this.
- We encourage you to look at the opportunities presented by the WASL, to ensure the state is getting feedback on how curriculum is affecting outcomes. Can we get better results in student achievement from certain curriculum content or methods of teaching?

### **Improve the Quality and Productivity of the Workforce**

- No questions or comments from the Guidance Team.

### **Improving the Value of a Post-Secondary Education**

- Performance contracting should be considered only if more accountability and results are delivered for the increased flexibility.
- Continue to elaborate a little more on the issue of quality. We talk a lot about the important nexus between high-quality education and economic vitality. What is the nature of the high-quality college education required to best support economic vitality?
- Please consider the role of private institutions in achieving this result. Is the state's role to support institutions or support students? If the latter, you have a greater variety of approaches available to consider.
- See notes about linkages with the Student Achievement team above.

### **Improve the Health of Washington Citizens**

- Your materials mentioned the decrease in taxed cigarette usage and other incentive programs. Have you discussed any new bold incentives in areas of health, besides tobacco prevention, that would change behavior, improve health and reduce costs?

We encourage you to develop some proposals. Note: there is a long-range consideration in relying on sin tax incentives as a broad funding source—when they work to discourage the targeted behavior (e.g. cigarette purchase and consumption), in the state takes in less revenue and has less money available for other health programs.

- The health agencies are cooperating on many issues, but we encourage you to look at whether they are cooperating on the right things and whether services are being delivered in the best places.
- Please consider looking at the most cost-effective set of services that could be offered in a health-insurance plan.
- We like the prevention focus. The state should try to take advantage of what appears to be a shift in public attitudes, as evidenced by changes in diet and fast food chain meal offerings.
- Does our state employee insurance plan have a cost-differential for smoking or other behaviors affecting health?
- Health care is a huge cost issue; what strategic choices should be made in health care if resources are limited or reduced? What should our priorities be in health care in order to use limited resources to achieve the highest level of positive results?

### **Improve the Security of Washington's Vulnerable Children and Adults**

- You mention collaboration and coordination with non-profits and others outside of state government, but this often takes a lot of effort to really implement. Please go deeper and define specific cooperation and coordination strategies. The implementation of 211 call centers may provide an opportunity for economies of scale in sharing information.
- It is not certain that we can continue to afford to serve everyone. Have you looked at how to prioritize whom we will serve? Where are the key leverage points?
- Please consider whether we are organized properly to deliver the service to the level of excellence we desire. In particular, are we organized effectively across state agencies to deliver consistent, high-quality services to children? We should take a fresh look at the safety net for kids from education, public health, and public safety perspectives.
- We would like to see some data about the role that economic self-sufficiency plays as a safety net. Could we do more to achieve the result if we focused on this area with hopes of helping folks not need the other elements of the safety net?

### **Improve the Economic Vitality of Businesses and Individuals**

- Are we organized the best way to achieve this result? Are we doing the right things and are the right entities doing them?
- These seem to be a comprehensive set of strategies. If we focused in these ten areas we would be on track to achieve this result.

### **Improve the Mobility of People, Goods, Information and Energy**

- Be cautious about proposals to have local governments invest heavily in technologies like broadband. Technologies are changing rapidly and we've seen the private sector suffer from over-investments in some areas.
- Would like to see more discussion in the mobility area about the connections with land use planning, permitting and other local processes. Mobility requirements can be a major budget driver and local government budgets may not sufficiently or strategically address mobility issues.

### **Improve the Ability of State Government to Achieve Results Efficiently and Effectively**

- When you look at the pressure on state agencies to perform, do you think enough is being done to develop line manager skills? Your proposals won't work without sufficient leadership capacity and management expertise. The state has done a pretty good job at training managers, but we could do better at training leaders.

### **Safety**

- If you had to focus on one strategy what would it be? For the next Tollgate, help us understand the priorities among the strategies you've presented and the themes serving as the foundation for these strategic choices.
- You noted indigent defense in your gap analysis. Do you think this gap means innocent people are getting convicted? Is the gap such that it is affecting people's views of the fairness and effectiveness of the justice system?
- We encourage this team to link with the human services results areas on prevention and treatment issues.
- Has the group discussed liability issues in this area and does it perceive this as a big problem?
- We'd like to know more about how to address the challenge of investing in prevention activities when there is often a bias against efforts that require up front costs for longer-term payoffs.
- Two of the items you noted as opportunities seem to be particularly fruitful to explore further: the overlaps in jurisdictions and restructuring sentencing to take better account of cost, risk and service needs.

### **Natural Resources**

- We encourage you to follow-up on the suggestion of improving the grant process.
- Each natural resource agency is attempting to influence individual and community behavior—would it make sense to coordinate this and have a natural resource education program, rather than multiple agency programs?
- Are there more prevention and incentive strategies to look at here?

- We encourage you to continue to look at connections and potential conflicts with the economic vitality area.
- We like that you are exploring additional areas of focus to provide a good framework for investment choices in the fall. We encourage you to think about the relative value of the results you might achieve as you are making investment choices.
- Keep in mind that any process you propose to achieve results has to be actually doable for the people who have to carry it out. Some things sound good in theory, but will prove too complicated and may encourage non-compliance.

### **Culture and Recreation**

- Have you considered that there might also be cultural or recreational resources we could off-load or privatize and what that might mean?
- The partnerships strategy should reinforce the first idea—making strategic choices.
- We were intrigued by the concept “the price of cooperation needs to be reduced.” How do you do this in practice? We encourage you to keep looking at it.
- We have all these separate jurisdictions operating parks—does this really meet the needs of citizens? Could we, or should we, approach this in a different non-silo way? Realize this is a challenging issue, but encourage you to think about what the state can do to help in this area.
- The ideas presented focused most on recreation and less on cultural opportunities or opportunities outside of state control. We encourage you to look at these other areas as well.